



Springtime for Benson Park



March 21 2013

Introduction

- ▶ Mission and Vision statement
- ▶ Benson Park – how we got here
- ▶ Projects – completed and in progress
- ▶ Benson Park today
- ▶ Future plans & projects



Benson Park Committee Mission & Vision

▶ Mission Statement

- ▶ The mission of the Benson Park Committee is to protect and maintain the rich history of the park. It will preserve and enhance a park which enriches the quality of life for the residents of Hudson and visitors alike, it will preserve the park for the enjoyment of present and future generations, and foster harmony with nature by promoting a wide range of year round passive recreational activities.

▶ Vision Statement

- ▶ To foster community pride and volunteerism in achieving our goals
- ▶ To plan for educational opportunities on the park's historical and environmental components
- ▶ To restore and preserve historical buildings and structures
- ▶ To preserve and protect our wildlife natural habitats
- ▶ To strategically prepare for future needs and projects



Benson Park not Benson's Wild Animal Farm

► Then



► Now



Benson Park – How We Got Here

How we got here

- ▶ Original Benson's Committee formed in late 1990s
- ▶ Benson's Master Plan – completed March 2002
- ▶ Historic structures reports – completed 2003
 - ▶ Historic structures include:
 - ▶ Train Station Depot building
 - ▶ Benson Office and Kitchen
 - ▶ Haselton Barn
 - ▶ Historic structures do not include:
 - ▶ Elephant Barn
 - ▶ Gorilla Cage
 - ▶ A-frame
 - ▶ The Old Shoe



How we got here

- ▶ Transfer property from State to Town of Hudson
 - ▶ Completed Jan. 2009
- ▶ Current Benson Park Committee formed early in 2009
- ▶ Work in park started spring 2009
 - ▶ To date, over 350 volunteers have contributed time, effort, and other donations to the park
 - ▶ Hudson Highway Dept. also major contributor
 - ▶ Many local businesses have contributed materials and labor
- ▶ Open house Oct 2009
- ▶ Official opening May 2010
- ▶ Benson Park dedication ceremony Sept. 25 2010



How we got here

- ▶ With all the changes, it is hard to remember the condition of the park in 2009



How we got here – Sept 25 2010



How we got here

- ▶ Subcommittees of Benson Park Committee
 - ▶ Landscaping
 - ▶ Trails
 - ▶ Building
 - ▶ Volunteers
 - ▶ Outreach
 - ▶ Photography
 - ▶ Dog Park
- ▶ Friends of Benson Park (501c3 non-profit)





Projects – Completed and In Progress

Projects – completed and in progress

- ▶ Benson Park is a work in progress
- ▶ Building stabilization
- ▶ Trails & trail signs
- ▶ Benson's Park signs reworked to reflect new name
- ▶ Park improvements
 - ▶ Parking Lot
- ▶ Landscape adopt-a-spots
 - ▶ Gardens of all sizes
 - ▶ Butterfly garden
- ▶ Ticket Booth restoration
- ▶ Gorilla cage pathway & landscaping



Projects – completed and in progress

- ▶ Playground
- ▶ 9-11 Memorial
- ▶ Dog Park
- ▶ Benches & Picnic tables
- ▶ Storybook Hill foot bridges
- ▶ Wildlife blind
- ▶ Bat houses
- ▶ Chestnut trees



Projects – completed and in progress

Building stabilization

- ▶ Replaced roofs on Gorilla Cage, A-frame, Elephant Barn and Office
- ▶ Installed temporary roofs on Train Station Depot and Kitchen
- ▶ Repaired and painted Gorilla Cage and Elephant Barn
 - ▶ Rebuilt Gorilla Cage roof supports
- ▶ Removed building attached to A-frame
- ▶ Repaired and painted The Old Shoe
- ▶ Sealed and secured Haselton Barn



Projects – completed and in progress

Building stabilization

- ▶ A-frame



- ▶ Elephant Barn



Projects – completed and in progress

Building stabilization

► Office & Kitchen



► The Old Shoe Part 1, Part 2 coming soon



Projects – completed and in progress

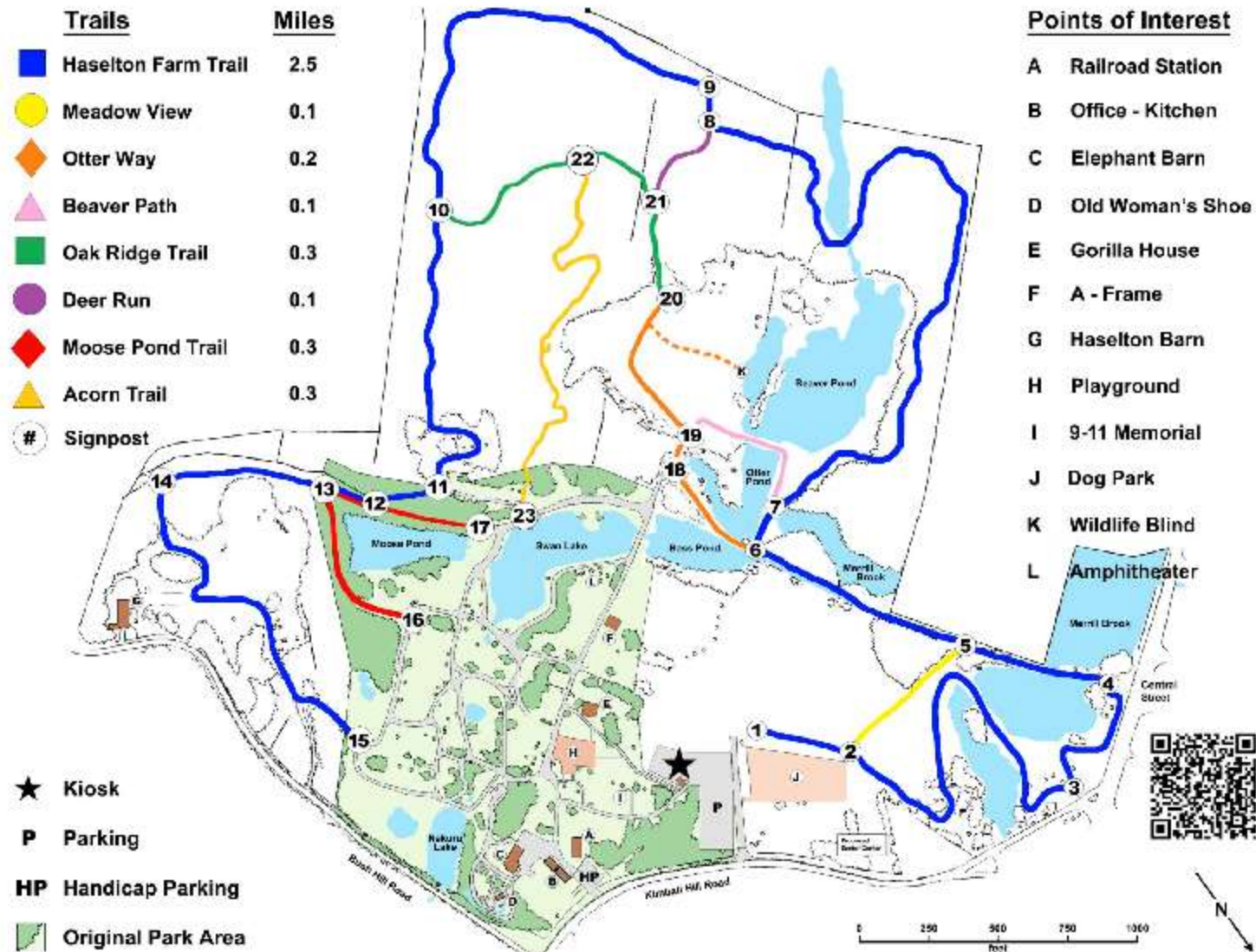
Building stabilization

► Gorilla Cage

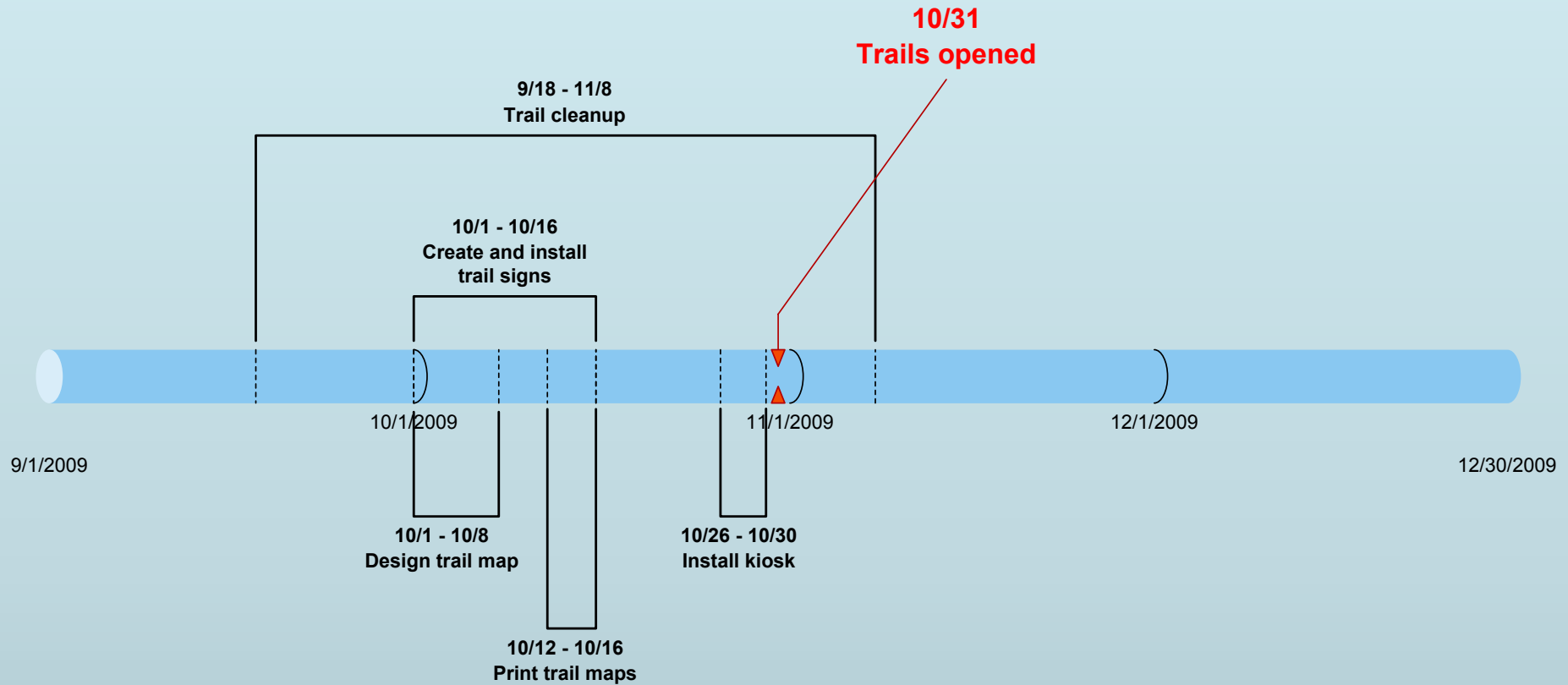


Projects – completed and in progress

Trails and trail signs



Benson Park Trails



Projects – completed and in progress

Trails and trail signs



Projects – completed and in progress

Trails and trail signs



Projects – completed and in progress
Main entrance signs reworked



Projects – completed and in progress

Park improvements

- ▶ Volunteers cleared underbrush, fallen trees, paths in historic area of park, etc.
- ▶ Parking lot established and expanded twice
- ▶ Park entrance Kiosk designed and constructed



Projects – completed and in progress

Landscape adopt-a-spot



Projects – completed and in progress

Landscape adopt-a-spot

- ▶ Between 30 – 35 landscape plots have been adopted
- ▶ Sizes vary: some are single person plots, some are family or group efforts



Projects – completed and in progress

Landscape adopt-a-spot

► Butterfly Garden

- Sponsored by GFWC Hudson Junior Woman's Club
- Received 2nd place award for GFWC Community Improvement Project



Projects – completed and in progress

Ticket Booth

► Eagle Scout project



Projects – completed and in progress

Gorilla cage pathway and landscaping



Projects – completed and in progress

Playground

- ▶ Cost of equipment taken from Recreation contributions from new home approvals
- ▶ Installation supported by volunteers



Projects – completed and in progress

9-11 Memorial

- ▶ Funds donated by members of community
- ▶ Hudson firefighters travelled to NYC to bring back beam from World Trade Center
- ▶ Accelerated construction completed in time for dedication on 9/11/2011



Projects – completed and in progress

9-11 Memorial



Projects – completed and in progress

Dog Park

- ▶ Non-profit group formed to design and build dog park
- ▶ Dog park opened Sept. 2012
- ▶ Group continues to raise funds and will maintain dog park in the future



Projects – completed and in progress

Benches & Picnic tables

► Fundraiser for Friends of Benson Park



Projects – completed and in progress

Storybook Hill foot bridges

► Eagle Scout project



Projects – completed and in progress

Wildlife blind

► Eagle Scout project



Projects – completed and in progress

Bat houses

- ▶ Built and installed by Litchfield's Campbell High School Biology class in 2010



Projects – completed and in progress

Chestnut trees

- ▶ Eight chestnut seeds planted as part of American Chestnut Foundation effort to develop a resistant tree





Benson Park Today

Benson Park today – Where are the animals?



Benson Park today

Where are the animals?



Benson Park today - Seasons





Future Plans and Projects

Future plans & projects

- ▶ Train Station
 - ▶ Relocation and restoration
- ▶ Elephant Barn
 - ▶ Restoration and museum
- ▶ Office & Kitchen
 - ▶ Restoration
- ▶ Mallory Gray Memorial Amphitheater
- ▶ Senior Center
- ▶ Historic area street signs
- ▶ Haselton Barn

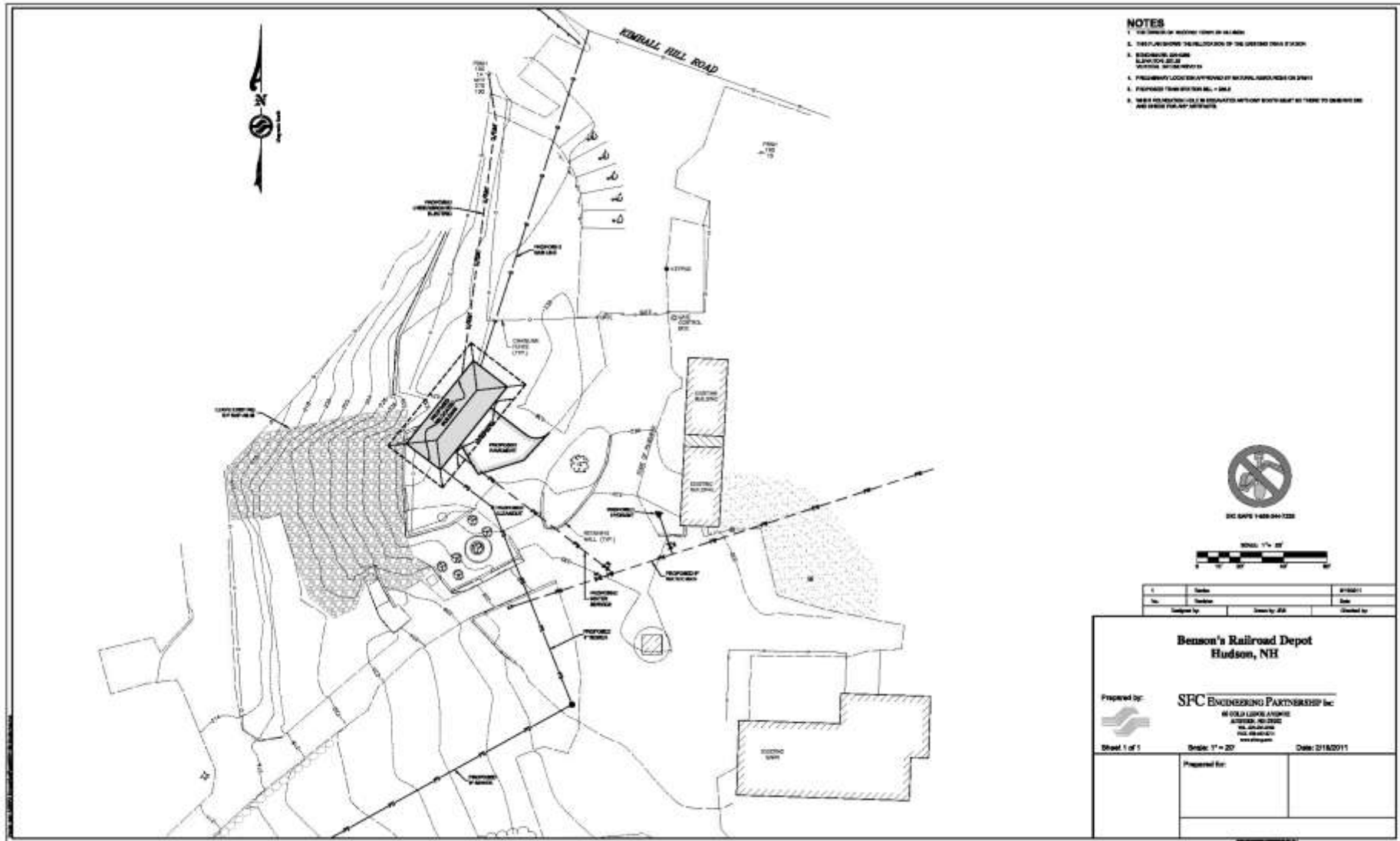


Future plans & projects – Train Station

- ▶ Temporary roof in place
- ▶ Complex project resulted in many schedule changes
- ▶ Costs have exceeded original estimates and money now available will only be for relocation to a permanent foundation and exterior restoration



Future plans & projects – Train Station

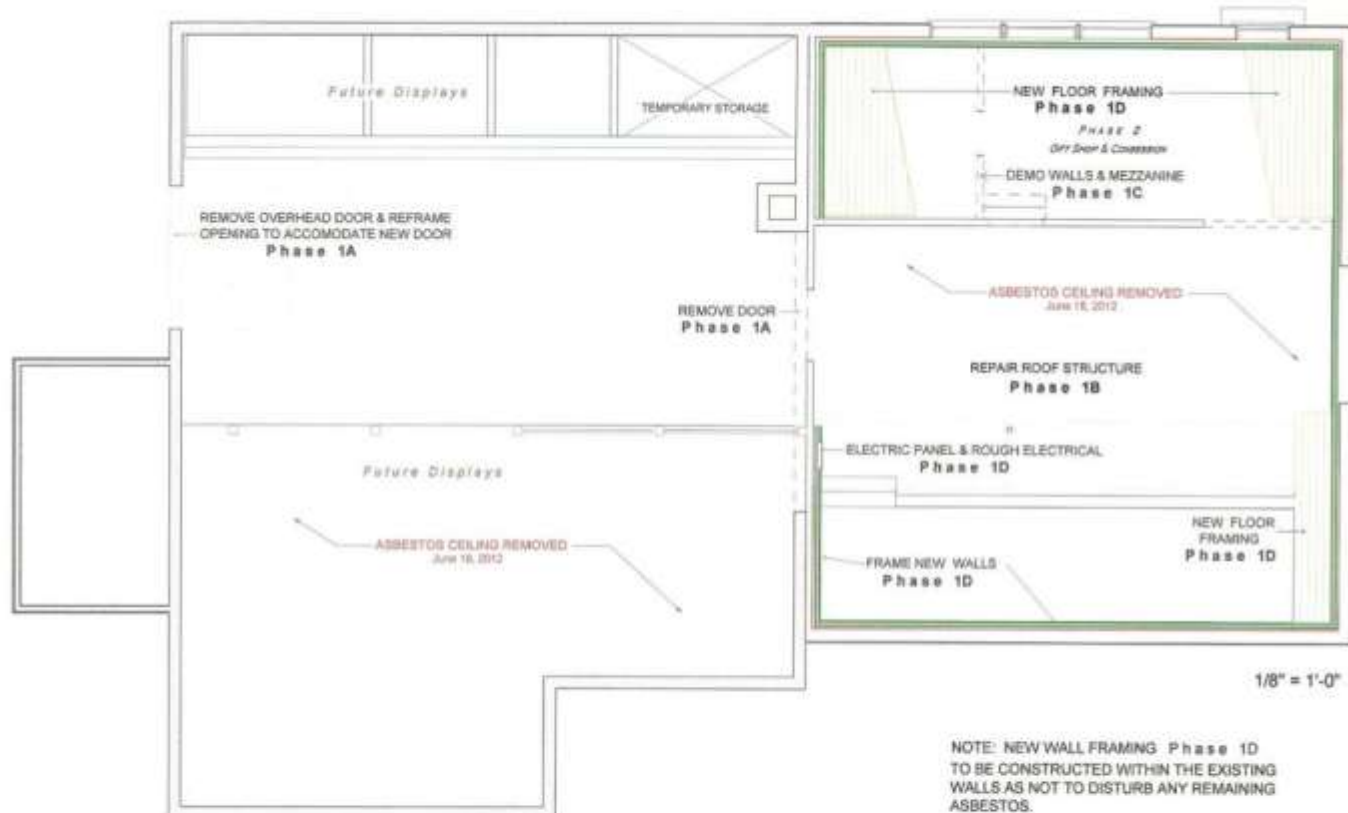


Future plans & projects – Elephant Barn

- ▶ Friends of Benson Park have obtained a lease from the Town of Hudson
 - ▶ Approved by voters at 2012 Town Election
- ▶ Intent is to turn it into a museum
- ▶ Developing plans and doing fundraising to renovate building



Future plans & projects – Elephant Barn



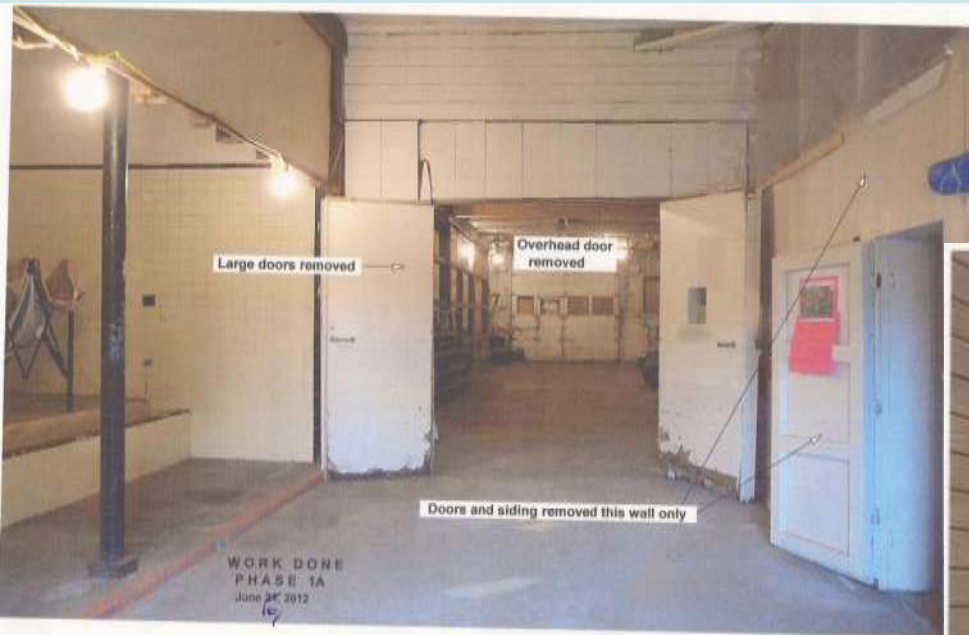
The Friends of Benson Park, Inc.
PO Box 81 Hudson, NH www.friendsofbenson.org

Elephant Barn PHASE 1

Revised June 21, 2012
Nov. 1, 2012

Drawings By: Richard Tassi
rttides@yahoo.com

Future plans & projects – Elephant Barn



Future plans & projects – Office & Kitchen

- ▶ One of the three historic buildings
- ▶ Restoration to be handled in phases spread over several years



Future plans & projects – Office & Kitchen

- ▶ First step in 2013 is to replace the foundation sill at the front of the building
- ▶ Two window repairs are planned for 2013 to provide additional light into main room of the building



Future plans & projects – Office & Kitchen

- ▶ Request for DHR “Moose plate” grant is being prepared to for the window restoration
 - ▶ If \$10,000 grant is awarded, work would likely be started in 2014



Future plans & projects – Office & Kitchen

▶ Other projects

- ▶ Remove lead paint from interior walls of Kitchen
- ▶ Restore clay tile roof on the Kitchen
- ▶ Replace temporary exterior wall on east side of Kitchen
- ▶ Restore functioning fireplace in Office
- ▶ Repair and paint siding on Office
- ▶ Reinstall bathroom in Office when water and sewer connections are available
- ▶ Repair/replace interior walls and flooring
- ▶ Install furnace in basement
- ▶ NH DHR will need to review all project plans



Future plans & projects – Mallory Gray Memorial Amphitheater

- ▶ Fundraising in progress
- ▶ No construction date at this time

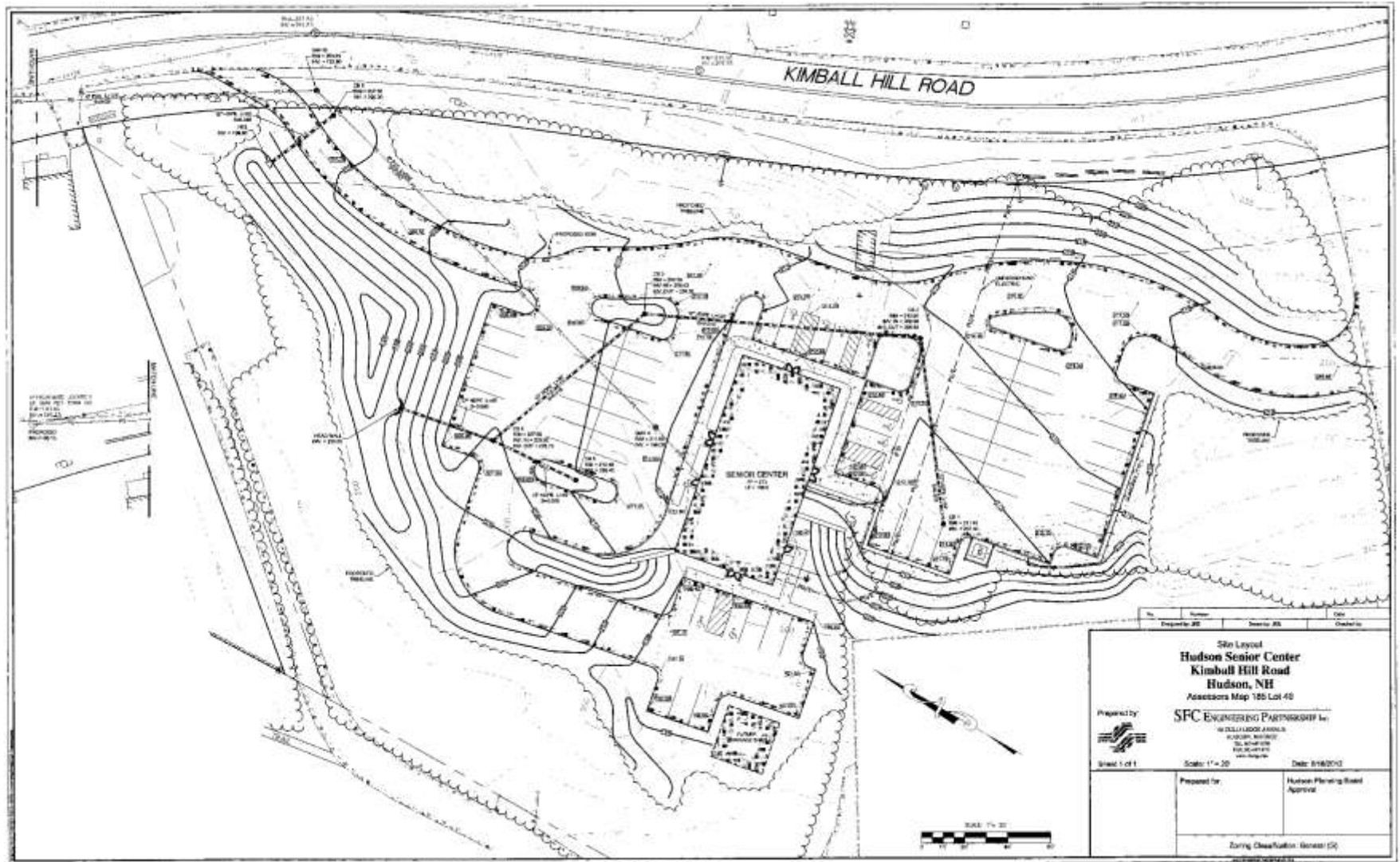


Future plans & projects – Senior Center

- ▶ Project approved at 2013 Town Election
- ▶ Joint Senior Center and CATV studio
- ▶ Starting final design stages
- ▶ Expect to go out for bidding this spring with construction to start in early summer

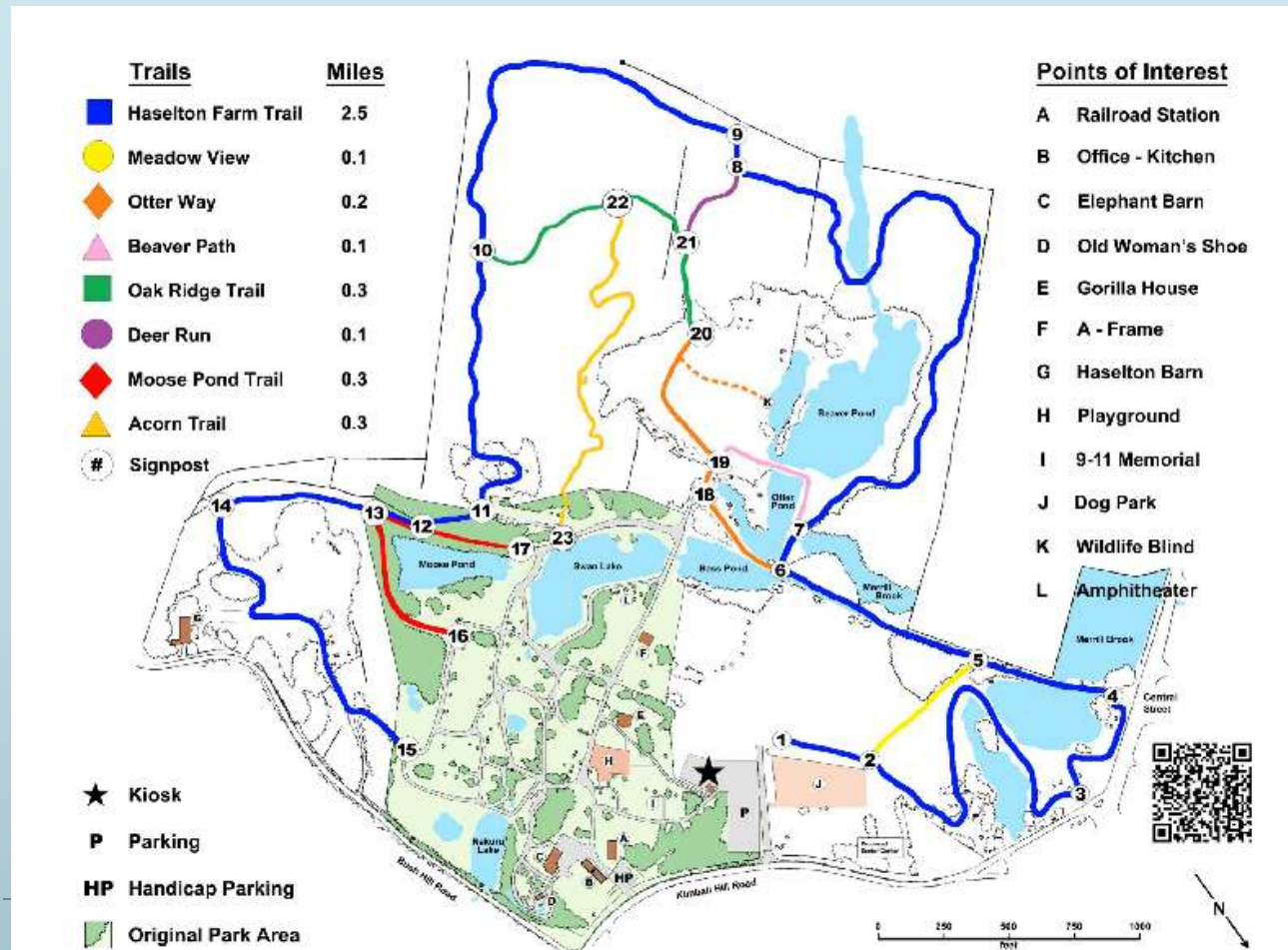


Future plans & projects – Senior Center



Future plans & projects – Historic Area Street Signs

- ▶ Benson Park Committee designing signs and posts for historic area of park



Future plans & projects – Haselton Barn

- ▶ No specific plans at present
- ▶ Expect eventual restoration of the building



Contacts

- ▶ Benson Park Committee
 - ▶ <http://www.hudsonnh.gov/boards/bensons>
- ▶ Friends of Benson Park
 - ▶ <http://www.friendsofbenson.org/>
- ▶ Dog Park
 - ▶ <http://www.hudsondogpark.com/>
- ▶ Mallory Gray Memorial Amphitheater
 - ▶ <http://www.malspals.org>
- ▶ Other sources
 - ▶ <http://bensonsanimalfarm.com/>
 - ▶ Facebook page
 - ▶ Wikipedia page



Photo credits

- ▶ A Desrosier
- ▶ P Nichols
- ▶ P Appler
- ▶ M Morin
- ▶ and many more...



Questions?

